

COD School Testing Guide

Introduction

The School Testing Guide is intended for all participants in the COD System. This includes both Phase-In and Full Participants.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of School Testing is to provide schools, third-party servicers and software vendors an opportunity to test business processes and system software with the COD System, prior to the transmission and processing of actual production data. This allows schools, third-party servicers and software vendors to make corrections or enhancements to software applications and processes prior to entering into the “live” production environment.

Note: References to the term “schools” includes schools and entities that process on behalf of schools (such as third party software vendors and third party servicers).

1.2 Scope

School Testing allows the opportunity to test the business processes and software applications used to support school processing under the COD System prior to commencing processing in the production environment. This effort makes problem discovery and resolution simpler, faster, and less costly in a low-volume, controlled test environment. The transmission of production data will be smoother, with fewer problems and there will be a reduced risk of production problems.

COD School Testing is broken down into four distinct phases of testing. The dates for these testing phases are contained within this document. A formal signup is required through the COD School Relations Center; see Appendix TB for the signup document.

Phase I - SAIG Communications Testing (Full Participants and Phase-In Participants)

COD works with schools to ensure that schools can transmit records and that these records can be delivered as expected. This test assists schools in the identification and resolution of communication issues before process testing begins in the upcoming phases. This testing phase was scheduled from 11/12/2001 through 12/19/2001. This testing phase was **required** for Full Participants and Phase-In Participants.

Phase II - Common Record Manual Verification (Full Participants Only)

COD works with schools to ensure that the XML format is received as expected and assists schools in the identification of potential updates to their Common Record submissions. Phase II testing assists in the preparation of the upcoming Phase III and Phase IV testing for 2002-2003. This testing phase is scheduled from 01/07/2002 through 09/30/2002. This testing is optional for Full Participants, and a formal signup prior to testing is required.

Phase III (IIIa and IIIb) – Structured Application Testing (Full Participants and Phase-In Participants)

COD works with schools using structured test cases to ensure that the systems are functioning as expected and assists schools in the identification of potential updates to their system before beginning actual processing for 2002-2003. Phase III consists of two phases. Phase IIIa is scheduled from 03/04/2002 through 04/22/02 and Phase IIIb is scheduled from 05/06/2002 through 05/27/2002. This testing is optional, and a formal signup prior to testing is required.

During Phase IV (IVa and IVb) –Application Testing (Full Participants and Phase-In Participants)

COD works with schools using structured test cases to ensure that the systems are functioning as expected. In addition, Full Participant schools can request an additional 13 students to test with in which schools can create their own test cases and expected results as well as test COD web functionality. Phase IV consists of two phases. Phase IVa is scheduled from 06/10/2002 through 07/08/02 and Phase IVb is scheduled from 07/22/2002 through 09/30/2002. This testing is optional, and a formal signup prior to testing is required.

All Schools can choose to test. Schools new to the Direct Loan Program must complete School testing with COD before moving into production.

Full Participant Schools are not required to test with COD, but are encouraged to participate in this testing. Full Participant Schools should refer to the *Full Participant School Test Case Guide* for more information. This guide contains a description of the test data sent to and from the schools to COD, with test execution guidelines and structured test cases with multiple testing cycles.

Phase-In Schools are not required to test with COD but are encouraged to participate in this testing. Phase-In Schools should refer to the *Phase-In School Test Case Guide* for more information. This guide contains a description of the test data sent to and from the schools to COD, with test execution guidelines and structured test cases with multiple testing cycles.

Schools that use a third-party servicer do not need to test with COD. Instead, the third-party servicer can complete the test on behalf of their Customers.

1.3 Guidelines

1.3.1 School Testing Phases

School Testing is conducted in four separate and distinct phases.

Phase I – SAIG Communications Testing

Phase II – Common Record Manual Verification

Phases III (IIIa and IIIb) – Structured Application Testing

Phases IV (IVa and IVb) – Application Testing

1.3.2 Test Entry Criteria

In order to begin testing with COD, schools need to complete the following steps:

- Complete a COD School Testing signup document located in Appendix TB, for the corresponding test phase and submit it to the COD School Relations Center no later than the assigned phase deadline.

- Establish individual testing date(s) specific for your school(s) by contacting the COD School Relations Center.
- Receive a testing Common School Code to be used just for testing purposes from the COD School Relations Center.

Note: A new test Common School Code is assigned for testing for Full Participants only. Vendors will test using a COD School Codes for testing purposes only.

- Receive a call from the COD School Relations Center or the COD School Test Team confirming test plans and COD readiness.
- Install the latest version of the message class table from SAIG.
- Install and implement the 2002-2003 updates to the software applications.
- Develop a means of keeping testing data segregated from production environment.
- Identify individuals at the school responsible for completing the COD school testing process.
- Develop a means of forward dating schools test environment.

Note: Testing within any previous phase is not a prerequisite for schools to participate in any other testing phase.

Note: CPS testing is not a prerequisite for COD School Testing.

1.3.3 Test Exit Criteria

The school and COD School Relations Center should jointly determine when the school has successfully completed COD testing. Schools can select which processes to test and schools are able to continue testing until expected results are received and testing is considered successful. There is no pre-defined “end” of the test other than the published end dates for each COD School Testing phase. Signup concludes approximately two weeks prior to the end of each test phase. Once the signup deadline for a testing phase has passed, schools wanting to test must signup for the next test phase.

Test Exit Criteria:

- Schools have been able to successfully complete the desired test scenarios by achieving the expected results.
- COD School Relations Center contacts school to verify the test results.
- Testing phase window closes prior to test completion by school.

Test Phase Descriptions

2.1 SAIG Communications Testing – Phase I

COD Full Participant and Phase-In Participants were required to participate in this testing phase. SAIG Communications Testing – Phase I took place November 12, 2001 through December 19, 2001. The purpose of the SAIG Communications Testing was to ensure that all schools could transmit records to COD using SAIG. This testing did not validate the data or the file format submitted.

Note: Phase I tested the ability for all schools to execute the file transfer process using SAIG.

2.2 Common Record Manual Verification – Phase II

Full Participants only are eligible to participate in the Common Record Manual Verification – Phase II. The purpose of the Common Record Manual Verification – Phase II is to ensure that Full Participant Schools can send COD a Common Record and that the Common Record is in the correct XML format. This testing does not validate the data submitted within the Common Record. For this phase of testing, only two student records should be sent in the Common Record.

2.3 Structured Application Testing – Phases IIIa and IIIb

COD Full Participant and Phase-In Participants are eligible to participate in this testing phase. The purpose of the Structured Application Testing is to ensure that schools can send, receive, and process batches of records using detailed input instructions with detailed expected results issued by COD. Schools use a test ISIR file supplied by COD that creates a test data set of students to use with the structured test cases.

Full Participants receive Common Record Receipts and Response files and need to verify that these records can be processed correctly.

Phase-In Participants receive Acknowledgements in fixed-length file format and need to verify that these files can be processed correctly. (During the COD process, Common Record Response files are translated to fix-length Acknowledgement files for Phase-In Participants only.)

2.4 Application Testing – Phases IVa and IVb

COD Full Participant and Phase-In Schools are eligible to participate in this testing phase. Phase IV allows schools to test after COD Release 1.1 has been migrated to production and allows Full Participant schools to test COD web functionality.

The purpose of the continued Application Process Testing is to ensure schools can send, receive, and process batches of records using detailed input instructions provided by COD. Schools that elect to participate in Application testing use a test ISIR file supplied by COD that creates a test data set of students that are used in the structured test cases. Application Testing enables both Full Participants and Phase-In Participants to use the structured test cases provided by COD.

For Phase-In Participants only, the Common Record Response files are translated to fix-length Acknowledgement files. Phase-In Participants receive Acknowledgements in fixed-length file format and need to verify that these files can be processed correctly.

Full Participants receive both Common Record Receipts and Response files and need to verify that these records can be processed correctly.

Phase IV has two additional aspects of testing for Full Participants only. Full Participants are provided the option to:

- Utilize additional test students to be used in unique test cases and expected results created by their school.
- The ability to participate in Web Application testing that is part of Phase IV. The purpose of the Web Application Testing is to ensure Full Participants can utilize COD web functionality prior to production. Schools should contact the COD School Relations Center for the web URL link to the COD School Test website and to receive the appropriate User IDs and passwords.

COD School Relations Center

Schools register for testing by contacting the COD School Relations Center and completing the signup document. The signup document allows selection of the test phases in which the school desires to participate and must be received no later than the phase signup deadline.

Once a school has signed up for testing, the COD School Relations Center will contact the school by telephone to obtain school-specific information and to schedule specific test dates for the school. The COD School Relations Center also provides additional information such as the testing Common School Code to be used by the school for the phase of testing.

Note: Full Participant schools are assigned a unique testing Common School Code for testing in which the school is participating.

The COD School Relations Center can be contacted by dialing either the Direct Loan number 1-800-848-0978 or the PELL number 1-800-474-7268 followed by the award year 2002 and asking for COD school testing support or by email at CODsupport@afsa.com.

3.1 Contact Names

Each school participating in testing notifies the COD School Relations Center of their designated contact person on the testing sign-up document. The contact person should be consistent for the period of time before, during, and upon completion of the test. The testing process likely involves a technical resource within the financial aid office. This person should be a technically oriented staff member who is very knowledgeable about the school's financial aid system. This person should be available to assist in problem analysis and to coordinate any follow-up tests that may be required. If a school uses a Third Party servicer and the servicer is conducting the test on behalf of the school, COD needs the name and telephone number of the servicer contact person.

3.2 Scheduling

Appendix TB of this guide contains the School Testing Sign-up Document that needs to be completed and emailed to the COD School Relations Center by the appropriate deadlines shown below:

Testing Phase	Testing Phase Description	Deadline	Who can Participate
Phase I	SAIG Communication Testing	12/19/2001	All
Phase II	Common Record Manual Verification Testing	09/20/2002	Full-Participants Only
Phase IIIa	Structured Application Testing	04/08/2002	All
Phase IIIb	Structured Application Testing	05/03/2002	All
Phase IVa	Application Testing	06/10/2002	All
Phase IVb	Application Testing	09/10/2002	All

When a school completes the School Testing Sign-up Document, the school is contacted by the COD School Relations Center to schedule testing dates within each phase of testing.

3.3 Support Services

While a school is going through the testing, there are many support sources available for assistance, as listed below:

School Support Services		
Support Service	For Information on the Following:	Contact
School Testing Sign-Up	Registering for School Testing.	Contact COD School Relations Center
ISIR Data Issues	Problems with ISIR data only.	Contact CPS/WAN Customer Service
SAIG	Issues concerning connectivity to SAIG only.	Contact CPS/WAN Customer Service
COD	Issues concerning all items related to Pell and DL processing only.	Contact COD School Relations Center
School Testing Issues	Issues concerning all items related to COD School Testing only.	Contact COD School Relations Center
School Testing Results	To obtain or report School Testing results for COD School Structured Testing only.	Contact COD School Relations Center

Test Data

The Test data section explains test data requirements for Phases III and Phase IV.

4.1 Full Participant (CR) Test Data

Full Participants are those schools who will begin processing in the 2002-2003 award year using the Common Record in XML format. Schools that have elected to participate in this manner test using the new Common Record format as published by the Department of Education in the COD Technical Reference.

COD provides actual CPS test data via an ISIR file to each participating school. Each school processes the ISIR data that COD provides and generates student award transactions using its normal awarding process. Schools are required to send this file to COD using the normal SAIG processing protocols with the exception of the school testing message

classes and the COD school testing destination mailbox, which will be provided during a school setup meeting. Upon submission of each test file, a school receives a “Receipt” file confirming that the file has been received by COD and is in a readable XML format. Once the data has been processed, schools receive a Response file indicating the results of each record submitted. If a record rejects, the Response record indicates which data element(s) have rejected. Rejected records can then be corrected and resubmitted.

The anticipated time from record submission to receipt of a Response file is approximately two business days.

4.2 Phase-In Participant Test Data

Phase-In Participants continue to use flat fix-length files to submit data and to receive responses from COD. The record layouts to be used by Phase-In Participants for 2002-2003 are in the 2002-2003 RFMS Technical Reference and the 2002-2003 Direct Loan Technical Reference. For these schools, there should be no significant change in business processes other than a few minor adjustments to the 2002-2003 record formats.

Each school processes the COD provided ISIR data and generates origination and disbursement transactions using its normal process. Schools submit their test files to COD using the normal SAIG processing protocols with the exception of sending the specified Phase-In School Testing message classes and using the specified COD School Testing mailbox destination, which will be provided during the school setup meeting.

Once COD has processed the data for the school, a Response file is generated and translated to the appropriate fix-length Acknowledgement file. The Acknowledgment is sent back indicating the results of each record submitted. If a record rejects, the Acknowledgement provides a reject reason. If the expected results were not intended to be a rejected record, schools can correct and resubmit the rejected records.

The anticipated time from record submission to receipt of an Acknowledgement file is approximately two business days for the purposes of testing.

Message Classes

5.1 Full Participant Schools

Common Record message classes are not year specific and are to be used from year to year. However, different test message classes must be used for testing.

5.1.1 Testing Phase Message Classes

During the testing for Phase II, schools use the following message classes when sending in Common Records for testing.

From school to COD: RPTESTIN

When COD processes the file, a Response file is generated under the following message class:

From COD to school: RPTESTOP

During the testing for Phases III and IV, schools use the following message classes when sending in Common Records for testing.

From school to COD: CRTESTIN

When COD processes the file, a Response file is generated under the following message class:

From COD to school: CRTESTOP

5.2 Phase-In Schools

Legacy message classes continue to be year specific. However, different test message classes must be used for testing.

5.2.1 Testing Phase

Phase-In Schools send in records according to the fixed-length formats published in the 2002-2003 RFMS Technical Reference and the 2002-2003 Direct Loan Technical Reference. Test message classes for these record layouts include:

5.2.1.1 Direct Loan Test Message Classes for Phase-In Participants

Direct Loan Test Message Classes	
Origination	
Full Subsidized/Unsubsidized Loan Origination Record	DTSF03IN
Full Loan Origination Acknowledgement	DTOD03OP
Change	
Origination Change Record	DTSC03IN
Origination Change Acknowledgement	DTOC03OP
Disbursement	
Disbursement Record: Actual Disbursements Adjustments to actual disbursement amounts Adjustments to actual disbursement dates	DTSD03IN
Disbursement Acknowledgement	DTOD03OP
Booking Notification	DTOD03OP

5.2.1.2 RFMS Test Message Classes

RFMS Test Message Classes	
Origination Records	PTOR03IN
Origination Acknowledgment	PTOA03OP
Disbursement Records	PTDR03IN
Disbursement Acknowledgement	PTDA03OP

5.2.2 Production Phase

In order to begin the production phase, all test data must be removed from the participating systems. Schools should ensure that files are sent using the proper production message classes and production destination.

Resource Planning

6.1 Hardware/Software

Schools should have all hardware and software capabilities ready before testing. Each school should have all upgrades installed from vendors or regulatory releases for 2002-2003.

6.2 Roles and Responsibilities

6.2.1 Schools, Vendors, and Third Party Servicers

Schools are responsible for completing the following steps associated with COD School testing:

- Review all COD School Testing documentation posted on the IFAP web site.
- Review the COD Implementation Guide in the COD Technical Reference.

- Review all documentation that is emailed to the participating school (if applicable).
- Schedule testing dates with the COD School Relations Center using the signup document via email.
- Prepare a test environment for COD School Testing that uses the test destination mailbox, test message classes and the test common school identifier.
- Ensure test environment allows forward dating capabilities.
- Prepare test data to execute the Structured COD School Testing scripts for submissions.
- Receive a technical readiness call from the COD School Relations Center after scheduling testing dates for each testing phase.
- Send the test data to COD via the SAIG.
- Retrieve receipts and responses from COD via the SAIG (Full Participants).
- Retrieve acknowledgments from COD via the SAIG (Phase-In Participants).
- Process submitted receipts (Full Participating Schools).
- Process responses/acknowledgments.
- Communicate results with the COD School Relations Center.
- Remove all data used for testing when completed from the school and/or vendor environment.

Note: Do not use real student data or production data during any phase of testing. Utilize the student data provided in the ISIR provided by COD.

6.2.2 COD School Relations Center

The COD School Relations Center provides the following support during testing:

- Conduct technical readiness calls with Schools.
- Provide schools/vendors with their own Testing COD School Code to use only during a specific testing phase.
- Process submitted data.

- Send receipts and responses (for Full Participates) via the SAIG.
- Send acknowledgments (for Phase-In Participates) via the SAIG.
- Update schools/vendors of their testing status.
- Assist with issue identification and resolution.
- Provide testing technical guidance.

Appendix TA - Acronyms

Acronyms	
AY	Award Year
COD	Common Origination and Disbursement
CBS	Campus-based System
CPS	Central Processing System
DLOS	Direct Loan Origination System
DLSS	Direct Loan Servicing System
EAI	Enterprise Application Integration
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FFEL	Federal Family Education Loan
FFELP	Federal Family Education Loan PLUS
FISAP	Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate in Campus-Based Programs
FSA/FMS	Office of Federal Student Aid/Financial Management System
GAPS	General Account Payment System
GUI	Graphical User Interface
ISIR	Institutional Student Information Record
NSLDS	National Student Loan Data System
PEPS	Postsecondary Education Participation System
RFMS	Recipient Financial Management System
SAIG	Student Aid Internet Gateway
SAR	Student Aid Report
SME	Subject Matter Expert
TMM	Total Methodology Maintenance
VDC	Virtual Data Center

Appendix TB: COD School Testing Sign Up Document



COD School Testing

Phases II, III & IV - Testing Sign-up

Please complete and send to **CODsupport@afsa.com**

Note: COD testing windows will close one week before and one week after each COD Release date. Please allow up to three weeks for the sign-up and set-up processes prior to testing. Depending on the phase of testing, testing may take up to two weeks. Please allow sufficient time for re-testing to meet your specific testing needs.

Date Submitted: _____

Desired Test Phase (Check all applicable testing phases):

☐ Phase II* ☐ Phase IIIa ☐ Phase IIIb ☐ Phase IVa ☐ Phase IVb
☐ Phase IVa or IVb Web Testing (Full Participants Only)

Organization: _____

Campus (if applicable): _____

COD Common School ID (Full Participants Only): _____

OPE ID #: _____

Full Participant or Phase-In? (Check one): ☐ Full Participant ☐ Phase-In Participant

Mainframe? (Check one): ☐ Yes ☐ No

Vendor Product Used (if applicable) _____

Aid Programs (Check all applicable for your test):

☐ Pell Grant ☐ Direct Loan ☐ Campus Based

Organization Type (Check all applicable):

☐ School ☐ Vendor ☐ Servicer

Testing TG Mailbox #: _____

Contact Person (Last, First): _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Contact Email Address: _____

Reporting School: _____

Attending School: _____



COD School Testing Phases – 2002/2003

